

NEWS RELEASE

Thursday 12th February

ECHO group takes part in ‘National Conversation’

This week ‘ECHO’ - the united voice of tenants and residents of Eden Housing Association had their say in the ‘National Conversation’ about standards in social housing. The ECHO (Eden Homes Communities and Organisations) meeting held in Penrith, gave local people the opportunity to take part in the largest ever consultation with tenants of social housing.

The ‘National Conversation’ which runs until March was organised by the Tenant Services Authority (TSA) - the new regulator for homes owned by Housing Associations and co-ops. They have been encouraging tenants to hold their own local events so Heidi Ware, Team Leader for Resident Involvement at EHA organised the local ECHO evening. She said “the TSA is drawing up a brand new set of standards for all social landlords. These standards should be about the services that are most important to tenants – that’s why the TSA is listening to tenants from all over the country to find out what they think of the current services provided and what is most important to get right. It is the largest ever consultation with social tenants and we were keen to be participate.”

Eileen Soulsby, Chair of ECHO said “This is the first time tenants have had the opportunity to get involved from the very beginning. It seems we do have a voice and it is our chance to help set the standards for all social landlords and make sure the service to tenants continues to improve. We had an excellent meeting with lots of positive ideas that will get fed directly to the TSA. The standards achieved by Eden Housing Association are very good; the level of customer care, speed and quality of the repair service and level of communication, but that’s not the case in all Associations. We are lucky to be living in Eden, but there are still things that national regulations should take account of for tenants living in rural areas. We hope our constructive comments count when they prepare the new standards.”

Once the TSA has received all the feedback they plan to draw up the first set of standards before talking once more to tenants so they can check the plans are in the right direction. Over the summer there will be more formal consultation before the standards are put in place in the autumn.



Anyone interested in finding out more or wanting to become involved with ECHO should contact Heidi Ware, EHA Team Leader for resident involvement on 01768 861 419 or email getinvolved@edenha.org.uk

Picture: ECHO members taking part in the TSA’s National Conversation – the largest ever national consultation with tenants of social housing.